

This week's community profile: Luxemburg

'It's a strong-spirited town'

By Lisa Sumter

Press-Gazette

LUXEMBURG — If people here developed a community bumper sticker, it might read, "Luxemburg: still growing strong."

The village of 1,151 is a place where business thrives, family is top priority and community pride abounds.

Clean neighborhoods with neatly kept, picture-postcard homes are the norm. Residents praise the Luxemburg-Casco School District and talk about friendly and reliable neighbors.

"It's a strong-spirited town, a proud town," says Tom Rueckl, co-owner of McMahon's Furniture, 530 Main St. "People keep up their places."

McMahon's is a corporation that includes a funeral home, a business that has deep roots in the Rueckl family. Tom Rueckl's great-grandfather was Luxemburg's first funeral director. He sold the business to the McMahon family in 1935 and it returned to its roots when Rueckl and two partners bought the funeral home and furniture store in 1972.

Village President Lew Du Chateau says Luxemburg's proximity to Green Bay accounts for some of the village's growth, but the village's atmosphere and progressive attitude also are factors.

"The people of the community don't want to see Luxemburg like some other small communities going downhill," he says.

"They want to see a steady growth and that's what's been happening in the last 10 years."

Luxemburg's population increased about 10 percent since 1980, Du Chateau says. During the previous decade, the population increased 22 percent.

"The pattern for Luxemburg is an immigration of young adults, while most small communities have an out-migration of young adults," he says.

About 25 homes and many apartment complexes were built in Luxemburg in the last five years, Du Chateau says. The village actively pursues new industry.

Luxemburg-Casco High and Luxemburg Elementary schools are here, along with a Catholic school, about 35 businesses, two churches, a fire department, a new village hall, and several parks. About 175 people work for the largest employer, NEW Plastics Corp. About half of the residents work in Green Bay.

Jerry Simonar, Route 3, is adamant about nurturing growth in the village.

"Luxemburg is growing. We're going to annex Green Bay someday," he says with a laugh, adding that Green Bay Mayor Sam Halloin hails from Luxemburg. "We're always looking for people to move to Luxemburg."

The Simonars make business a family affair. Jerry and his brothers, LeRoy and Richard, own a service station and tire center, and a boat and snowmobile sales and service store. Thirteen of their sons work in those businesses.

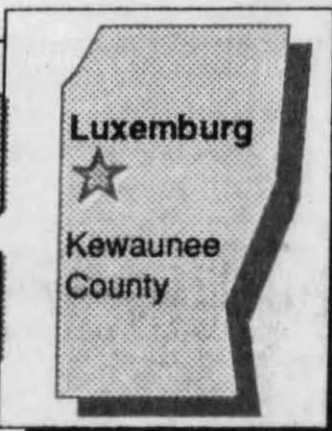
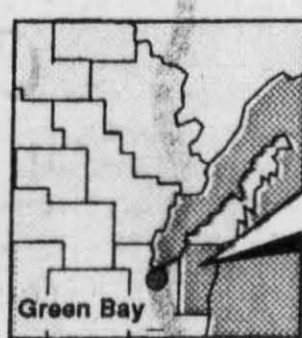
Other family members run a gunsmith business, a child-care center and an apartment complex. At least a dozen other Luxemburg businesses are family owned, Simonar said.

Luxemburg has been the site for the annual Kewaunee County Fair since 1910, fair president John Du Chateau says. This year's event will be Aug. 1-4.



Just for laughs: John Du Chateau, left, jokes with Jack Bancroft at the Kewaunee County Fair-

grounds. Du Chateau is fair president. Bancroft is in charge of the poultry-rabbit building.



The Luxemburg file

- ☐ **Population:** 1,151
- ☐ **Always improving:** Recent developments include a water tower and upgraded pumping station; a refurbished Village Hall and community center; and an addition including a library, auditorium and classrooms at the high school.
- ☐ **Rummage-o-rama:** A community-wide garage sale figures to be an annual event. The first one, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce in May 1990, included more than 50 homes.

"The people of the community don't want to see Luxemburg like some other small communities going downhill."

— Village President Lew Du Chateau

A 60-year resident of Luxemburg and the village fire chief, Du Chateau, 306 Colle St., says the fair generates publicity for the village.

All the ingredients for a typical county fair are here — music, truck and tractor pulls, carnival rides and animals.

Du Chateau's involvement with the fair, almost continuously since high school, boils down to a love of working with children.

"I love entry day, when all those kids come in and their eyes are so wide, wondering if they're going to win a prize," he says.

The fairgrounds also is the site for

weekly stock car races. From the first weekend in May until Labor Day, the 1/8-mile track roars with 100 cars each Friday night. An estimated 1,800 to 2,000 spectators attend each race.

Golf is a popular hobby in Luxemburg. NorthBrook Country Club, Route 2, has an 18-hole course that is well-known throughout Northeastern Wisconsin.

With Lake Michigan only about 15 miles away, fishing is a passion for some residents.

For others, softball leagues are in full swing at the village's lighted diamond.

■ **Next week:** Carnot in Door County



Boat buddies: From left, LeRoy, Jerry and Richard Simonar talk while their mascot sits at the wheel of a boat at Simonar Sports, which the brothers own.



Sand in hand: From left, Ali Schwoerer, 6, and Katie Peters, 2, play in the sand with Debbie Simonar, Luxemburg, owner of Teach & Care Day Care.